the Brahmaputra from Dhubri to Sadiya and the West Coast Canal from Kottapuram to Kollam along with Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals have been declared as National Waterways and are being developed by the Government for the purpose of shipping and navigation. Basic infrastructural facilities such as navigational channels, terminals and navigational aids are being maintained. Techno-economic feasibility studies of some more waterways have been conducted with a view to assessing their potential for development and declaration as National Waterways. The Waterways other than the National Waterways can be developed by the respective State Governments for which assistance is provided by the Central Government under Centrally Sponsored Scheme. With a view to accelerate development of Inland Water Transport (IWT) and to involve private sector participation, an Inland Water Transport Policy has been approved by the Government which includes some policy measures and fiscal concessions to encourage private sector.

Reservation of jobs for disabled persons in private and public sector

1198. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in 1995, the Parliament passed the Disability Act to provide *inter alia* for the reservation of jobs for the disabled persons in the private and public sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the provisions of the law have been implemented and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) to (d) The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 provides for 3% reservation in employment in the establishment of Government of India and Public Sector Undertakings against posts identified as suitable for persons with disabilities. As per information provided by Department of Personnel & Training (DOPT) in March, 2001, the status of reservation for persons with disabilities in

various Ministries/Departments with reference to the identified posts in Group A, B, C & D is 6.65%, 5.43%, 6.50%, and 6.39%, respectively. According to the information provided by Department of Public Enterprises in January, 2002, the status of reservation in Central Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) for persons with disabilities against the identified posts in Group A, B, C & D is 2.78%, 8.54%, 5.04% and 6.75% respectively.

Demands made by Disabled Rights Group

1199. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government recently reviewed the progress made on the demands of the Disabled Rights Group for improving infrastructure and social conditions to help the physically and mentally challenged and bring them into mainstream;

(b) if so, whether a review meeting was held in the month of August, 2002 to discuss the demands made by the Disabled Rights Group;

(c) if so, how many of its demands have been met; and

(d) to what extent the directive has been implemented to meet the demands of the disabled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A meeting was also held on 6-5-2002 with the representatives of Disabled Rights Groups in this regard.

(c) and (d) The demands cover a wide range of issues such as raising of limit of income tax exemption of disabled persons, no duties and taxes on aids & appliances meant for disabled persons, incentives to private sector to promote employment, shifting office of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCD) to Delhi, all facilities/ concessions given to persons with orthopaedic, visual and hearing disabled to be extended to mentally challenged, one per cent reservation for people with mental and/or developmental disabilities in C&D category of jobs,